

METHODS OF COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

1. Methods of data collection

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Documentation review
- Observation
- Focus groups
- Case studies

2. Questionnaires

- Can get a lot of information easily and quickly
- Non threatening
- Can complete anonymously
- Sample of questionnaires already exist
- Clients confuse of the items asked

3. Interviews

- To fully understand impression/experience
- More elaboration of the answer in the questionnaire
- Full range and depth of information
- Develop relationship with the clients
- Time consuming and hard to analyse the data

4. Documentation review

- Impression of a program currently operates
- Review of applications, finance, memos, minutes and etc.
- Information already available
- Information may be incomplete and restricted to available data
- Need to be clear about what to look for

5. Observation

- To gather accurate information about how a program actually operates i.e. the process

- Can adapt to events as they occur
- Can be difficult to interpret observed behavior
- Can be complex to categorize observation

6. Focus groups

- Explore a topic in depth through discussion
- Quickly and reliably get common impressions
- Can convey key information about the program
- Can be hard to analyze responses
- Difficult to schedule 6-8 people together

7. Case studies

- To fully understand or depict clients experiences of a program and conduct comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases
- Powerful means to portray program to outsiders
- Represent depth of information rather than breadth
- Time consuming.

8. Overall goal in selecting methods to be used

- Key questions:
 - What information is needed to make current decisions about a program?
 - How accurate will the information be?
 - Will the methods get all needed information?
 - What additional methods should and could be used if additional information is needed?
 - Will the information appear as credible to decision makers?
 - Who can administer the methods? Training?
 - How the information be analyzed?
- Ideally combination of methods should be used
- A questionnaire quickly collect the information, then interviews get more in-depth information

- Case studies for more detail and in-depth analysis of unique and notable cases, e.g. those who is or not benefited from the program, those who quit the program.